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January 2011 V1

British Waterways

Skipper's Guide
2011

Liverpool Canal Link (LCL)

British Waterways

Welcome to the Liverpool Canal Link (LCL)

The Leeds and Liverpool Canal was authorised in 1770 and constructed in sections until the main line, delayed by wars with France, was finally complete by 1816. At this time the canal terminus in Liverpool was near Old Leeds Street and consisted of a basin several metres away from and above the nearest docks which were George's Dock and Basin. These led to the construction of the South Docks of Albert, Salthouse and others further up the river. Due to there being no direct connection between canal and docks, transhipment of goods from docks to canal and vice versa was a laborious inefficient task.

During development of the Central Docks north down the River Mersey estuary in the mid 1800s a flight of four locks was constructed at Stanley Lock Flight to carry canal vessels down to the docks and entered the dock system through Stanley, Collingwood and Salisbury Docks. Here a barge lock was constructed to allow vessels to enter the river.

In 1981, as the result of a government initiative, Merseyside Development Corporation was established with a brief to revitalise the South Docks area, attract inward investment, business and visitors.

In 2003 ownership of the South Docks waterspace was transferred to BW who have exciting plans for the further development of the waterspace as a vibrant destination for visiting ships, pleasure boats and inland waterways craft as well as a water recreation amenity for Liverpool and the surrounding area.

The LCL provides a navigable route from the bottom of the existing Stanley Lock Flight on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal to Liverpool's South Docks.

Funding for the Project was secured from the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), the Merseyside Objective One programme (European Regional Development Fund), English Partnerships, Peel Holdings and British Waterways.

The construction of the LCL was split into four contracts and orders placed with three different construction companies; Pierse Construction Ltd; Balfour Beatty plc and HBG Construction Ltd under contract from Countryside Neptune. The construction was managed by British Waterways.

British Waterways have negotiated a 'right of passage' through Liverpool Central Docks with the dock owners.

British Waterways is responsible for the ongoing operation of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, Liverpool Canal Link and Liverpool South Docks. For further information please contact them on the numbers at the back of this document.

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DIMENSIONS

Maximum Boat Size			
Liverpool to Wigan and Leigh Branch (including Liverpool Link)			
Length	**Beam**	**Draught**	**Headroom**
72ft 21.6m	14.3ft 4.29m	3.94ft 1.2m	8 ft 2.4m
Please note headroom can reduce to 2.16m beneath Great Howard Street Road Bridge if Central Dock water level is high (see section 7.5- Stanley Locks Flight)			

USEFUL NUMBERS

BW Wigan Office	**01942 405700**
BW Liverpool Dock Office	**0151 709 6558**
BW Emergency Number	**0800 47 999 44**
Emergency Services	**999**

11.7 On leaving Prince's Dock Lock proceed through the Central Docks Channel towards Salisbury Dock (Salisbury dock is easily identified as there is a large clock on the western side!), turn right into Collingwood Dock and proceed towards Stanley Dock.

11.8 On entering Stanley Dock proceed towards Stanley basin; remember the air draught beneath Great Howard Street Road Bridge can be as little as 2.16m, if the central dock water level is high.

11.9 BW Staff will tell you when it is safe to enter the Stanley Lock Flight.

11.10 Proceed in a northerly direction towards Litherland. At Bridge 6 'Netherton Swing Bridge' BW Staff will operate the bridge. Boaters should not attempt to operate this bridge.

11.11 After leaving Bridge 6 travel north towards Bridge 9. BW Staff will operate this bridge for you. Boaters should not attempt to operate this bridge

11.12 Consideration should be given to the 2 hours sailing time required between bridge 9 and bridge 16, and the fact there are 5 swing bridges to be operated by the boater on this stretch of canal.

Tall ships in Canning Half Tide Dock

LOCATION

1.1 The Liverpool Canal Link (LCL) starts in Stanley Dock as you exit Stanley Bottom Lock (Lock 4) on the Stanley Flight.

1.2 Maps of the LCL are located on pages 5 & 6 of this guide.

OPERATION

2.1 Navigation on the LCL is limited. All passages are assisted by BW staff as they are required to operate some of the swing bridges and locks both on the L&L and the LCL.

2.2 The L&L and the LCL can accommodate full length wide beam boats.

2.3 Bridge 9, Hancock's Swing Bridge and Bridge 6, Netherton Swing Bridge on the L&L shall only be operated by BW staff.

2.4 Stanley Flight Locks on the L&L, and Prince's Lock and Mann Island Lock on the LCL shall only be operated by BW staff.

2.5 Access to the south docks may be restricted because of poor weather conditions or if Canning River Entrance is in use by sea going vessels around tide times.

2.6 Boats wanting to enter the docks may be required to moor in Mann Island Basin until informed it is safe to proceed.

2.7 Boats waiting to leave the docks may be required to stay on their moorings or moor in Canning Dock, as instructed, until it is safe to proceed.

2.8 BW staff will only be available to operate swing bridges and locks on the dates and times on your 'Confirmation of Booking' letter

2.9 Whilst on the L&L Canal and the LCL, customers will be required to comply with British Waterways (BW) terms and conditions and abide by their regulations and bylaws.

2.10 Whilst in Stanley Dock customers will be required to comply with Kitgrove Ltd Dock Rules and terms and conditions.

2.11 Whilst in Collingwood, Salisbury, Trafalgar, West Waterloo, Prince's Half Tide and Prince's Dock customers will be required to comply with Peel Ports Dock Rules and terms and conditions.

2.12 Whilst in the Liverpool South Docks customers will be required to comply with BW Dock Rules and terms and conditions.

2.13 **Peel Ports, Kitgrove Ltd and BW reserve the right to close their waterways and docks at any time and without reason.**

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SAFETY

3.1 It is important that boaters are familiar with the boat-handling and safety information given in 'The Boaters Handbook' and the information in this 'Skippers Guide', both issued by BW.

3.2 Children should wear life jackets while in the central docks and south docks waters. Adults are strongly advised to wear them.

3.3 Boats must not stray outside the navigation lanes designated by floating buoys while in the Central Docks.

3.4 The water in the docks can be up to 8 metres deep. Dock steps, grab chains and ladders are located in the central and south docks and lifebuoys are located around the south docks. Skippers should make themselves aware of the location of the safety equipment whist sailing through the docks.

3.5 Skippers should be aware that weather conditions can change rapidly in the docks, with the wind crating 'funnels' between buildings and through dock passages often making navigation difficult. Please be aware that many of the docks are large, exposed areas of water, and there are many blind corners especially around dock passages.

EMERGENCIES

4.1 For operational emergencies please contact the BW Emergency Number:

0800 47 999 47 and supply details of the incident and the location.

4.2 For life threatening emergencies please call 999 and supply details of the incident and the location.

5.2 It is recommended that you travel south to Bridge 9 the day before and stay overnight on the moorings available either side of the canal just before the bridge.

5.3 Alternatively boats should moor north of Bridge 16 or Bridge 10 for the night and travel down to Bridge 9 the next day. Consideration should be given to the 2 hours sailing time required to reach Bridge 9 from Bridge 16, and there are 5 swing bridges to be operated by the boater on this stretch of canal.

5.4 Boats that are booked to travel to the LCL are required to meet at the moorings north of Bridge 9, Hancock's Swing Bridge, on the L&L, at **9:30am** and await the arrival of BW staff. BW staff will operate the swing bridge for you and will be available to assist you on the remainder of your trip.

TRAVELLING SOUTH FROM BRIDGE 9

6.1 After leaving Bridge 9 boats should travel south until they reach Bridge 6 'Netherton Swing Bridge'.

6.2 BW staff will be available at Bridge 6 to operate it. Boaters should not attempt to operate this bridge.

6.3 After leaving Bridge 6 boats shall continue south until reaching the BW Litherland Office. Boaters should use these pump out and Elsan facilities if necessary. Pump out cards cannot be purchased at Litherland Office.

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8.9 Entering the South Docks

Proceed out of Mann Island lock and bear right past two former graving dock entrances. The third 'passage' adjacent to the Pump House pub is Canning Dock passage, travel through here into Canning Half Tide Dock, continue in a westerly direction and after approximately 100m turn left and enter Albert Dock via Albert Passage. **Do not enter Albert Passage if the dock gate is closed, and ensure navigation light is on green before proceeding.**

The air draught below Hartley Bridge is approximately 3 m.

Canning Dock and Canning Half Tide Dock are operational docks and are frequently utilised by sea going vessels, especially around high water times. If the operational docks are in use then passage from the canal link to your berth in Salthouse Dock will be delayed until all marine operations are complete.

Once in Albert Dock bear to the left and head for Salthouse Dock Passage, this will give you access to pontoon moorings in Salthouse Dock. Remember when transiting dock passages keep to the right and sound your horn. Also be aware that you may encounter vessels coming in the opposite direction.

VISITOR MOORINGS

9.1 Visitor moorings in Salthouse Dock are for a maximum of 12 days inclusive .You must moor at your allocated berth in Salthouse Dock shown on your booking confirmation. Electricity and water are available on the pontoons.

9.2 Visitors wishing to extend their stay in Salthouse Dock for longer than 12 days are advised to contact the Liverpool Canal Link Team at the Wigan office on 01942 405700. A charge of £20 per day will be made for each extra day. Alternatively contact the Harbourside Marina on **0151 707 6777** where visitor berths may be available in Brunswick/Coburg Docks Residential berths are not permitted anywhere.

SAILING WITHIN THE SOUTH DOCKS

10.1 If a boater wishes to sail within the south docks from their mooring in Salthouse Dock, they must first obtain permission from the Harbour Manager 0151 709 6558

The south docks are used by a variety of recreational users including swimming clubs and sub aqua clubs. Liverpool Watersports Centre is located in Queens Dock and activities take place on a daily basis. The Yellow Duck Marine amphibious vehicle also operates daily throughout the dock system and boats are likely to be disturbed by the wash from the yellow duck marine. The Harbour Manager will need to check for any activities that are in operation at the time before giving permission to leave your mooring.

LEAVING LIVERPOOL SOUTH DOCKS FOR THE RETURN TRIP TO BRIDGE 9 ON THE L&L CANAL

11.1 Boats should be ready to leave their mooring in Salthouse Dock at the time given on their 'Confirmation of Booking' letter.

11.2 BW Staff will tell you when to leave your mooring and make your way into Albert Dock, through Albert Passage and turning right into Canning Half Tide Dock and into Canning Dock.

11.3 Once in Canning Dock BW Staff will tell you when to enter Mann Island Lock.

11.4 Mann Island Lock is operated by BW Staff who will tell you when to leave the lock and enter Mann Island Basin.

11.5 Once at Prince's Dock Lock BW Staff will tell you when it is safe to enter.

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Navigation through a deviation approximately two thirds of the way through is assisted by a localized widening of the channel. Pass beneath bridge CC.

The channel leads south into the West Waterloo Dock and then through a passage into Prince's Half Tide Dock. The route crosses the Prince's Half Tide Dock and passes beneath the Prince's Dock Causeway Bridge (Bridge DD) and enters Prince's Dock itself. Boats navigate the length of the dock, passing beneath the Prince's Dock Footbridge (Bridge EE) and leave via the Prince's Dock Lock. Buoys mark a safe channel through the Prince's Dock. **Whilst passing beneath Prince's Dock Footbridge please ensure that you keep in the centre of the buoyed channel, as there is restricted headroom on the outside of the channel.**

8.5 Prince's Dock Lock (Lock 5)

This lock can only be operated by BW staff.

Prince's Dock Lock is a traditional broad beam mitre gate lock with gate sluices. The area is fenced to exclude the public.

Mooring bollards are provided on either side of the lock.

The drop of the lock varies from 1.31 m to 0.70 m depending on the dock water level.

8.6 Pier Head Tunnels and Basins

On leaving the Prince's Dock Lock boats enter the St Nicholas Tunnel. This is approximately 190 m long and leads to the Pier Head section of canal. This section is 6.5 m wide, curved in the middle and has an allowable draught of 1.2 m. The water depth is generally 1.5 m elsewhere.

The tunnels are unlit and on approach to each tunnel, boaters are advised to switch on any 'headlights', some cabin lights and also sound their horn.

Both sides of the tunnel are fitted with timber fenders incorporating hand rails in the fenders. St Nicholas Tunnel leads to Liver Basin. From this basin boaters are able to view the Liver Building.

From Liver Basin boats enter Cunard Tunnel. This tunnel is 99 m long, narrows to 6.5 m in width and is unlit.

From Cunard Tunnel boats enter Museum Basin. From this basin boaters are able to view the Port of Liverpool Building and the Museum of Liverpool.

The canal continues into the Museum Tunnel, (88m in length) which passes beneath the Museum of Liverpool, and leads to the Mann Island Basin and Mann Island Lock.

Stopping or mooring is not allowed anywhere along this length of canal, except at Prince's Lock. Obviously boats should stop if an emergency arises.

Life buoys are provided in the open water spaces of this section of canal.

8.7 Mann Island Basin

Moorings are provided in the Mann Island Basin for boats to use while the Mann Island Lock is being used or whilst a restriction on lock movements is in place.

8.8 Mann Island Lock (Lock 6)

Mann Island Lock takes you into Canning Dock. This lock can only be operated by BW staff.

There are flood gates fitted to the east end of the lock that will be closed when the water level in Canning Dock is higher than in the Mann Island basin. The flood gates are operated by BW staff and are generally left open during operating hours. The area is fenced to exclude the public.

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6.4 From Litherland boats should make their own way to Stanley Lock Flight.

Stanley Lock Flight is located at the southern end of the L&L approximately 200m north of Eldonian Basin. Stanley Lock Flight is a series of 4 locks that drop 13.5 m to Stanley Dock.

TRAVELLING SOUTH ON THE LCL TO LIVERPOOL SOUTH DOCKS

7.1 Stanley Lock Flight

The 4 locks that make up the Stanley Flight will only be operated by BW Staff, although assistance from boaters will be most welcome

7.2 Boats should wait on their moorings until instructed to enter Lock 1 by BW Staff.

7.3 After passing down Stanley Lock Flight the boats arrive in a basin at the bottom.

7.4 Boats may leave the basin and continue their passage on the LCL without waiting for the remainder of the convoy, bearing in mind they will need to wait at Prince's Lock for the BW Staff to arrive to operate it.

7.5 Before leaving the Stanley Lock Flight basin, Skippers should check their boat will pass under Great Howard Street Road Bridge (Bridge AA) and two small bridges on the other side of it. The air draught available can reduce to 2.16 m when the central dock water level is high. An air draught marker is installed at the side of the bridge. Skippers are reminded that the passage through to Stanley Dock is not in line with Stanley bottom lock.

8.1 Stanley Dock

Stanley Dock, together with the other docks to the west and south of it, is referred to as the Central Docks.

The LCL route passes through Stanley Dock with its high wharves and disused warehouses on both sides.

Sailing down the dock, ahead can be seen the Regent Road bascule bridge (Bridge BB) leading into Collingwood Dock. All boats should pass beneath this bridge with care if travelling at high water, as a series of structural transverse beams restricts the air draught.

8.2 Collingwood Dock

Once again a dedicated navigation channel, travelling east to west, is marked by floating buoys and boaters must stay within this channel.

Boaters should continue to the end of the dock into Salisbury Dock Passage.

8.3 Salisbury Dock

Boaters should continue travelling west towards Victoria Clock Tower at the far end of the dock. Halfway down the dock, boaters should turn south (left) into the navigation channel marked by floating buoys leading into Trafalgar Dock Passage.

8.4 Central Docks Channel

Boaters should continue travelling south through the cutting in to what was previously Trafalgar Dock. You will pass the Clarence Graving Dock on the east side (left). The largely straight channel continues through a length of backfilled docks with an existing dock wall on the east side and a side slope to the west. Boaters are advised to keep to the centre of the channel.

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LIVERPOOL CANAL LINK